

*WHEREAS the United States Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health has concluded that mental health is an essential component of overall health and well-being; and*

*WHEREAS for more than 50 years, Mental Health America has proclaimed May as, "Mental Health Awareness Month", to raise awareness about mental health, combat the social stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness that often prevents people from seeking help, promote a message of hope and recovery and celebrate consumer strength and resilience; and*

*WHEREAS the Middlesex County Mental Health Board's Guiding Principles value a mental health system of care that: is consumer focused and recovery oriented; fosters collaborative partnerships among consumers, peers, families, providers and community; fully supports a strong consumer and family presence and voice; is comprehensive, accessible, inclusive, trauma informed and culturally competent; and embraces evidence based and best practices that promote wellness across the continuum of care; and*

*WHEREAS people with mental illnesses recover if given the necessary support and services in the community, however only one out of two people with a serious mental illness seek help due to stigma and the fear of discrimination; and*

*WHEREAS Middlesex County recognizes the stigma associated with mental illness and that many people remain unserved in part, because of the stigma of seeking help. This month we call attention to this so we can bring mental illness out of the shadows and encourage treatment and support. We acknowledge that greater public awareness about mental illness can change negative attitude and behaviors; and*

*WHEREAS Middlesex County stands with those impacted by mental illness and pledges to increase awareness and greater understanding of mental illness, reduce stigma and discrimination and promote appropriate, accessible support and services. We strive to promote a message of hope and belief that healing and recovery are attainable.*

*NOW, THEREFORE I, RONALD G. RIOS, DIRECTOR of the Board of Chosen Freeholders of Middlesex County, do hereby proclaim the month of May, 2017 as*

## ***MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH***

***in***

## ***MIDDLESEX COUNTY***

*and call upon the citizens of Middlesex County to take time this month to bring awareness to Mental Health.*

*Adopted: May 4, 2017*